

# ***Church History***



# ***Church History***

- *Introduction to Church History*
- *The Ancient Church* AD 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries
- *The Rise of Christendom* AD 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *The Early Middle Ages* AD 6<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *The Age of Crusades* AD 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *The Renaissance* AD 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *Conquest and Reformation* AD 16<sup>th</sup> century
- *The Age of Enlightenment* AD 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *The Age of Revolution* AD 19<sup>th</sup> century
- *The Modern Age* AD 20<sup>th</sup> century
- *The Postmodern Age* AD 21<sup>st</sup> century



# ***Church History***

- *Introduction to Church History*
- *The Ancient Church* AD 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries
- *The Rise of Christendom* AD 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *The Early Middle Ages* AD 6<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *The Age of Crusades* AD 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *The Renaissance* AD 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *Conquest and Reformation* AD 16<sup>th</sup> century
- *The Age of Enlightenment* AD 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries
- *The Age of Revolution* AD 19<sup>th</sup> century
- *The Modern Age* AD 20<sup>th</sup> century
  - *Modern Empire-Building*
  - *Post-War Religion*
  - *Conflicts of the “Greatest Generation”*
  - *The New Conservatism*
  - *Backlash to the New Conservatism*
  - *Modern Religion (part 1)*

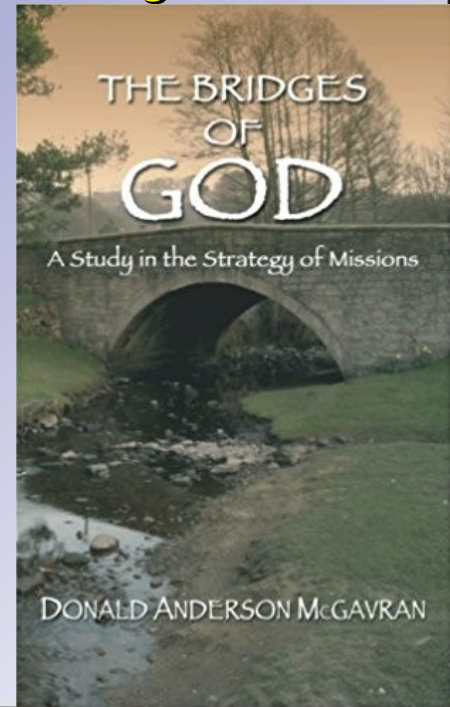


# *The Modern Age*

- The “modern” church began to take shape
  - 1975 Willow Creek Community Church founded
    - Bill Hybels was a student at Trinity University, then a Youth Pastor at a local church
      - He was inspired by one of his professors at Trinity (and by the 1954 book *The Bridges of God*, written by a third-generation missionary to India who argued that to reach people, you need to understand their culture, reach them where they are at—using their own language—and help tether them to God using the bridges of family, community, and culture)



**WILLOW CREEK**  
COMMUNITY CHURCH





# *The Modern Age*

- The “modern” church began to take shape
  - 1975 Willow Creek Community Church founded
    - Bill Hybels was a student at Trinity University, then a Youth Pastor at a local church
      - He was inspired by one of his professors at Trinity, so he tried to design a Youth ministry that would actually connect with 1970s young people where they were at, using their own culture, music, technologies, etc.
      - Within three years, his 25-member Youth Group grew to 1,200—and with 300 more standing in line hoping to get in to their services
        - He realized that this wasn't just a “Youth” model, but a way to reach the culture at large (who had, as we've seen, concluded that “traditional” services were old-fashioned, but found this “new” kind of service more relevant to where they were at in their lives—and let's be honest, it was more relevant and whether you use the term “traditional” or “old-fashioned” kinda betrays where you fall on that spectrum in the tension of appreciating what's come before and appreciating those you're trying to reach with the unchanging Gospel)



**WILLOW CREEK**  
COMMUNITY CHURCH



# *The Modern Age*

- The “modern” church began to take shape
  - 1975 Willow Creek Community Church founded
    - Bill Hybels was a student at Trinity University, then a Youth Pastor at a local church
      - He was inspired by one of his professors at Trinity, so he tried to design a Youth ministry that would actually connect with 1970s young people where they were at, using their own culture, music, technologies, etc.
      - Within three years, his 25-member Youth Group grew to 1,200—and with 300 more standing in line hoping to get in to their services
        - He realized that this wasn't just a “Youth” model, but a way to reach the culture at large
          - In 1975, the church began with 125 people renting out space in a local movie theater and by 1977, they had 2,000 members and today, they have 26,000 members meeting for weekly worship services



**WILLOW CREEK**  
COMMUNITY CHURCH

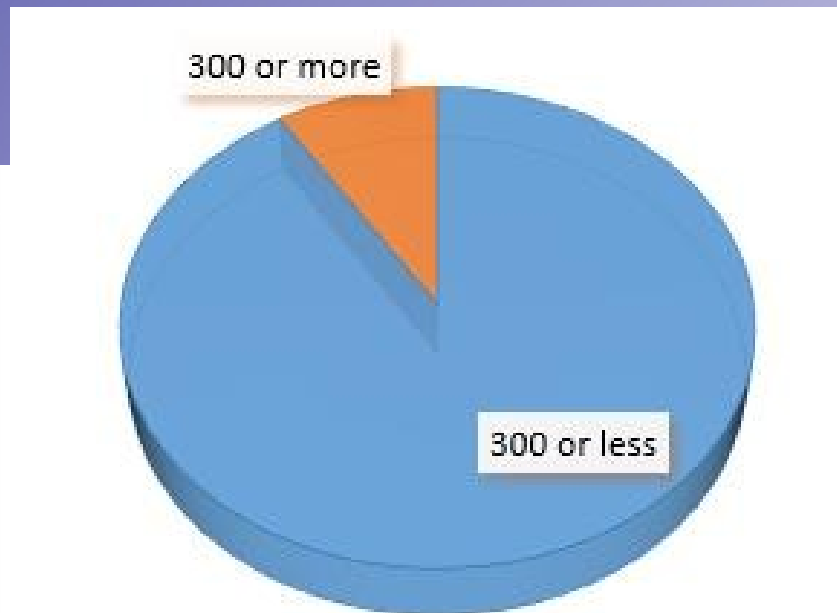


# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Willow Creek thus pioneered two different modern ecclesiastical phenomena—
    - The “megachurch”
      - The median church size in America is actually 75 members—so even a small church like ours is larger than the national median (even factoring in megachurches like Willow Creek, the national *average* is still only 186 members—and only a tiny sliver of churches have more than 300 members)



**WILLOW CREEK**  
COMMUNITY CHURCH





# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Willow Creek thus pioneered two different modern ecclesiastical phenomena—
    - The “megachurch”
      - The median church size in America is actually 75 members—so even a small church like ours is larger than the national median—and that means that megachurches are operating on a totally different level of organizational scope than the vast majority of congregations  
(imagine inviting 10 people to your Thanksgiving dinner and having 3,500 hungry people show up, and that’s the ratios that we’re talking about)



**WILLOW CREEK**  
COMMUNITY CHURCH





# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Willow Creek thus pioneered two different modern ecclesiastical phenomena—
    - The “megachurch”
      - The median church size in America is actually 75 members—so even a small church like ours is larger than the national median—and that means that megachurches are operating on a totally different level of organizational scope than the vast majority of congregations
      - So Hybels and Willow Creek had to create whole new models of leadership for such large groups, built on the existing models of megabusinesses in the contemporary secular world  
(and before we get too bent out of shape about that, remember that many of our “traditional” church structures were originally based on existing models of dukedoms and baronies in the contemporary secular world of the Middle Ages—so if it was wrong and secular for Hybels to do, then we ought to similarly judge all of those bishops, cardinals, councils, and Popes...)



**WILLOW CREEK**  
COMMUNITY CHURCH



# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Willow Creek thus pioneered two different modern ecclesiastical phenomena—
    - The “megachurch”
    - The “seeker-sensitive” service
      - In order to reach people “where they are at,” Willow Creek used using multimedia presentations, modern music and styles of dress, dramas and skits, and a far more relaxed preaching style using modern translations of the Bible
      - But more than that, when they began, they also consciously tried to remove everything from the “traditional” model of church that might offend or otherwise trip non-Christians up—whether that be level of jargon or structure of nursery
      - While that’s not altogether bad to do (’cuz missionaries do it all the time, and Hybels saw the young people of the United States as increasingly an unreached mission field)



**WILLOW CREEK**  
COMMUNITY CHURCH





# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Willow Creek thus pioneered two different modern ecclesiastical phenomena—
    - The “megachurch”
    - The “seeker-sensitive” service
      - In order to reach people “where they are at,” Willow Creek used using multimedia presentations, modern music and styles of dress, dramas and skits, and a far more relaxed preaching style using modern translations of the Bible
      - But more than that, when they began, they also consciously tried to remove everything from the “traditional” model of church that might offend or otherwise trip non-Christians up—whether that be level of jargon or structure of nursery
      - While that’s not altogether bad to do, even by 1979, Hybels realized that they’d become vapid in their approach and in their teaching, and Willow Creek re-branded itself as a deeper-reaching church (of course, by then, the “seeker-sensitive” model had caught on, as other churches saw Willow Creek’s growth and wanted to emulate it)



**WILLOW CREEK**  
COMMUNITY CHURCH





# *The Modern Age*

- **Funky little teaching moment—**
  - Willow Creek thus pioneered two different modern ecclesiastical phenomena—
    - The “megachurch”
    - **The “seeker-sensitive” service**
      - In order to reach people “where they are at,” Willow Creek used using multimedia presentations, modern music and styles of dress, dramas and skits, and a far more relaxed preaching style using modern translations of the Bible
      - **But more than that, when they began, they also consciously tried to remove everything from the “traditional” model of church that might offend or otherwise trip non-Christians up—whether that be level of jargon or structure of nursery**
      - While that’s not altogether bad to do, even by 1979, Hybels realized that they’d become vapid in their approach and in their teaching, and Willow Creek re-branded itself as a deeper-reaching church
      - **Many “seeker-sensitive” churches see their Sunday morning services as purely outreach venues (some then provide deeper, believer-focused services on Saturday evenings—but not all do)**



**WILLOW CREEK**  
COMMUNITY CHURCH



# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Willow Creek thus pioneered two different modern ecclesiastical phenomena—
    - The “megachurch”
    - The “seeker-sensitive” service
  - We should also note that in 2008, after a four-year self-assessment, Willow Creek re-structured and re-branded itself again—this time, modeling itself around small groups and deeper, personal study
    - Though that's a huge shift from their megachurch model, the basic philosophy is still the same—reach the culture where it's at
      - In the 1970s, Willow Creek was all about fun, drama, guitars, and contemporary music
      - In the 1980s, it was all about the slick, professional, and entertaining floor show
      - Today, Willow Creek is responding to the post-modern heart for community, immediacy, and connection with people who are living things out with a deep level of genuineness



**WILLOW CREEK**  
COMMUNITY CHURCH



# *The Modern Age*

- **Funky little teaching moment—**
  - Willow Creek thus pioneered two different modern ecclesiastical phenomena
  - **All of this comes with its own baggage, good and bad**
    - **Good—**
      - The new models focused themselves on actually reaching out to the lost *as a congregation*
      - They focused on every member being actively involved in the process of “church,” with no one perceived as too old or young to be doing ministry
      - The teaching focused on life application—that the Bible is relevant to every part of your life
      - They opened up a renewed appreciation for the arts and for creative expression as an act of worship—whether that's through drama or murals or whatever



**WILLOW CREEK**  
COMMUNITY CHURCH





# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
    - Willow Creek thus pioneered two different modern ecclesiastical phenomena
    - All of this comes with its own baggage, good and bad
      - Good
      - Bad—
        - The new models focused on giving a culture more of itself, instead of *transforming* the culture
        - The new models avoided any complicated or uncomfortable teachings that might offend
        - They thus not only focused on being more shallow or vapid, but actually made that the generational *norm* for what people were looking for in a church (which is part of why so many churches had so little real *meat* to give people after 9-11)
- (of course, *another* part is that so many *other* models of “church” had been mainly focused on maintaining their *status quo* of their traditions, structures, and numbers over the decades, rather than on enabling actual, personal, spiritual growth)



**WILLOW CREEK**  
COMMUNITY CHURCH



# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Willow Creek thus pioneered two different modern ecclesiastical phenomena
  - All of this comes with its own baggage, good and bad
    - Good
    - Bad—
      - The new models focused on giving a culture more of itself, instead of *transforming* the culture
      - The new models avoided any complicated or uncomfortable teachings that might offend
      - They thus not only focused on being more shallow or vapid, but actually made that the generational *norm* for what people were looking for in a church
      - Making use of fresh structures soon became—ironically—just a maintenance of *those* structures
      - Services became *about* putting on a slick floor show, instead of focusing on using that to reach people where they're at
      - Churches began focusing on how to grow in number of members, instead of on how to reach people where they're at
      - Churches became focused on how to stay relevant and modern *as its own goal*, rather than on how to continue to best reach people where they're at



**WILLOW CREEK**  
COMMUNITY CHURCH



# *The Modern Age*

- **Funky little teaching moment—**
  - Willow Creek thus pioneered two different modern ecclesiastical phenomena
  - **All of this comes with its own baggage, good and bad**
    - Good
    - Bad
    - Amazingly, even the most *focused* ministries can lose their focus over time and practice, and become lost in the momentum of the juggernaut that they've become



**WILLOW CREEK**  
COMMUNITY CHURCH





# *The Modern Age*

- The “modern” church began to take shape

1975

Willow Creek Community Church founded

1977

Focus on the Family was founded

- Founder James Dobson was the son of a third-generation Nazarene minister, but chose to study psychology instead of ministry
  - In the 1950s, an Evangelical studying psychology would've put Dobson at odds with pretty much everybody—the predominantly liberal field of psychology would've seen him as an outsider while the conservative Christian community would've seen him as essentially “going liberal” by supporting even the idea of secular psychological counselling
  - So when he turned 40, Dobson requested a leave of absence from his post on the staff of the Children's Hospital of Los Angeles in the Division of Child Development and Medical Genetics to begin a ministry specifically helping Evangelicals understand the importance of psychology in child development and family dynamics—which pretty much confused everyone at first



# The Modern Age

- The “modern” church began to take shape

1975

1977

Willow Creek Community Church founded

**Focus on the Family was founded**

- Founder James Dobson was the son of a third-generation Nazarene minister, but chose to study psychology instead of ministry
- Within a few years, Focus on the Family had become a daily program heard on 200 outlets, and Evangelical families across the nation were tuning in for his advice on child-rearing
- In 1983, the ministry began its own monthly magazine, followed in 1987 by *Citizen* magazine, *Clubhouse Jr.* magazine in 1988 for small children and *Brio* and *Breakaway* magazines in 1990 (geared toward teen girls and boys)





# The Modern Age

- The “modern” church began to take shape

1975

1977

Willow Creek Community Church founded

**Focus on the Family was founded**

- Founder James Dobson was the son of a third-generation Nazarene minister, but chose to study psychology instead of ministry
- Within a few years, Focus on the Family had become a daily program heard on 200 outlets, and Evangelical families across the nation were tuning in for his advice on child-rearing
  - In 1983, the ministry began its own monthly magazine, followed in 1987 by *Citizen* magazine, *Clubhouse Jr.* magazine in 1988 for small children and *Brio* and *Breakway* magazines in 1990
  - 1987 was also the year that the radio program added a regular dramatic series for children called *Adventures in Odyssey*  
(which became an instant hit with its fans —by 1995, it was the second-most popular Christian radio show in the United States, and by 2002, the show aired on more than 6,000 stations worldwide)





# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - In 1996, Dobson and his wife were in Washington, DC for the National Day of Prayer, and were therefore on hand when Billy Graham was honored with the Congressional Gold Medal
  - In his speech, Graham lauded America and its positive spirit of achievement and its history of appreciation for God—but then also noted a darker present  
“Nevertheless, something has happened since those days and there is much about America that is no longer good. You know the problems as well as I do; racial and ethnic tensions that threaten to rip apart our cities and neighborhoods; crime and violence of epidemic proportions in most of our cities; children taking weapons to school; broken families; poverty; drugs; teenage pregnancy; corruption; the list is almost endless. Would the first recipients of this award even recognize the society they sacrificed to establish? I fear not. We have confused liberty with license--and we are paying the awful price. We are a society poised on the brink of self-destruction.”



# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - In 1996, Dobson and his wife were in Washington, DC for the National Day of Prayer, and were therefore on hand when Billy Graham was honored with the Congressional Gold Medal
  - In his speech, Graham lauded America and its positive spirit of achievement and its history of appreciation for God—but then also noted a darker present
  - Ten minutes later, Dobson was informed that a gunman was holding his staff hostage at the Focus on the Family facility in Colorado Springs
    - Denver construction worker Kerry Steven Dore had been injured working on a Focus on the Family building in 1992, and decided to take out his anger on Dobson personally—not realizing that he wasn't even in the state
    - After four hours, Dore surrendered to police, and no one was injured—but Dobson was shaken by the event
    - The already politically militantly conservative Dobson became increasingly political as the years progressed, and the ministry became more and more about promoting political conservatism and less about focusing on family issues specifically





# *The Modern Age*

- The “modern” church began to take shape

1975

Willow Creek Community Church founded

1977

**Focus on the Family was founded**

- Founder James Dobson was the son of a third-generation Nazarene minister, but chose to study psychology instead of ministry
- Within a few years, Focus on the Family had become a daily program heard on 200 outlets, and Evangelical families across the nation were tuning in for his advice on child-rearing
- **In 2004, the ministry began Focus on the Family Action—a political organization designed to support conservative political candidates and legislation**

(NOTE: It was rebranded as “CitizenLink” in 2010, and then the “Family Policy Alliance” in 2014)





# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - In 2008, Dobson published a speculative letter, dated “2012,” warning American voters what the country would be like if Obama won the Presidential election—citing details such as
    - The legalization of homosexual marriages
    - The censuring of the Boy Scouts and churches for not hiring homosexual staff members
    - The censuring of businesses that do not pay for abortions and birth control for employees
    - The signing of laws protecting abortion
    - The reduction of the military and withdrawal from Iraq leading to the strengthening of militant Muslim factions in the Middle East
    - This would also lead to countries such as Russia feeling that they have the opportunity to “test” America by invading and occupying neighboring states such as the Ukraine
    - And all of this would lead to higher taxes in America, a massive budget deficit, a worse standard of living for the poor, domestic violence, etc.  
(and he *also* said several things that *didn't* end up happening...)



# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - In 2008, Dobson published a speculative letter, dated “2012,” warning American voters what the country would be like if Obama won the Presidential election
  - People exploded in anger at his letter—but the issue wasn't about whether or not Dobson was *right* about any of his predictions, but rather about the fact that his ministry focus had clearly swung far more toward bashing liberals and away from teaching parents the best, most Biblical ways of raising their children
  - In 2009, Dobson was asked to step down from the Board of Directors, and longtime Focus on the Family staff member and evangelist Jim Daly took the reins rebranding the ministry, and promising to put the focus back on the family
  - As Daly told *Christianity Today*,  
“We tend to shut down the ears of people to hear the gospel because they only see you in a political context or as a conservative.  
Christianity must *transcend* politics in order to *change* culture and politics...”  
(NOTE: Though still committed to conservative political issues, today's Focus on the Family actively keeps itself anchored in equipping parents and serving families)





# *The Modern Age*

- The “modern” church began to take shape

1975

Willow Creek Community Church founded

1977

Focus on the Family was founded

*The Myth of God Incarnate* was published

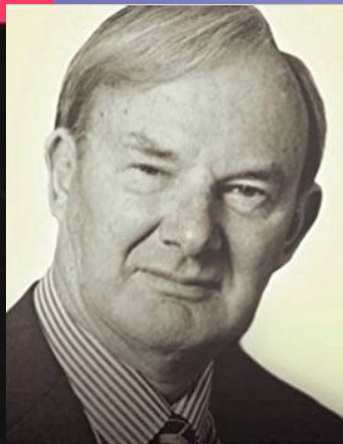
- One of the leading philosophers of religion in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, John Hick was actually a committed Evangelical as a young man, but later drifted toward what he argued was a more “inclusive” understanding of religion as he aged

(As Hick argued,

“The Nicene definition of God-the-Son-incarnate is only *one* way of conceptualizing the lordship of Jesus, the way taken by the Graeco-Roman world of which we are the heirs... In the new age of world ecumenism which we are entering, it is proper for Christians to become conscious of both the optional and the mythological character of this traditional language.”)

**The Myth  
of God  
Incarnate**

**Edited by  
JOHN HICK**





# *The Modern Age*

- The “modern” church began to take shape

1975

Willow Creek Community Church founded

1977

Focus on the Family was founded

*The Myth of God Incarnate* was published

- One of the leading philosophers of religion in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, John Hick was actually a committed Evangelical as a young man, but later drifted toward what he argued was a more “inclusive” understanding of religion as he aged
- In Hick's line of thinking, Jesus was a good man who was extremely open to being used by God (“Jesus was so open to divine inspiration, so responsive to the divine spirit, so obedient to God's will, that God was able to act on earth in and through him. This, I believe, is the *true* Christian doctrine of the incarnation.”)  
(i.e.; the true “incarnation” of God *isn't* that He became flesh in *Jesus*, but that He makes Himself known and active in the world through people like Jesus—or you, or me...)

The Myth  
of God  
Incarnate

Edited by  
JOHN HICK

# ***The Modern Age***

- The “modern” church began to take shape

1975

Willow Creek Community Church founded

1977

Focus on the Family was founded

***The Myth of God Incarnate was published***

- One of the leading philosophers of religion in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, John Hick was actually a committed Evangelical as a young man, but later drifted toward what he argued was a more “inclusive” understanding of religion as he aged
- In Hick's line of thinking, Jesus was a good man who was extremely open to being used by God, and His amazing holiness led people to *poetically* think of Him as the Son of God—which, over time, was transposed by “religion” from a *metaphorical* to a *metaphysical* perception of Jesus, but it's not like Jesus was *actually* “God in the flesh”  
(and thus, “to say, without explanation, that the historical Jesus of Nazareth was also God is as devoid of meaning as to say that this circle drawn with a pencil on paper is also a square”)

**The Myth  
of God  
Incarnate**

**Edited by  
JOHN HICK**



# ***The Modern Age***

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Thus, to be a “Christian” is not to be someone who is saved by the propitiation performed by the Son of God but rather to be someone who lives out the incarnation—being the body of God on Earth—by living like Christ and His disciples lived (i.e.; “in living as the disciples who in his name feed the hungry, heal the sick and create justice in the world”)

**The Myth  
of God  
Incarnate**

**Edited by  
JOHN HICK**





# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Thus, to be a “Christian” is not to be someone who is saved by the propitiation performed by the Son of God but rather to be someone who lives out the incarnation—being the body of God on Earth—by living like Christ and His disciples lived
  - So with that in mind, *all* religions that point to the importance of living moral lives ultimately honor God (as is evidenced by the title of his 1982 book)

GOD  
HAS MANY  
NAMES

JOHN HICK



# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Thus, to be a “Christian” is not to be someone who is saved by the propitiation performed by the Son of God but rather to be someone who lives out the incarnation—being the body of God on Earth—by living like Christ and His disciples lived
  - So with that in mind, *all* religions that point to the importance of living moral lives ultimately honor God and thus *all* religions are paths to salvation
  - Since all religion is based on its social, historical, and cultural contexts, then any religion can be seen as simply *that* context's attempt to understand the incomprehensible God
  - Thus, no religion has cornered the market on “Truth,” and all religions are more or less equally valid in their attempts to reach “Truth”

GOD  
HAS MANY  
NAMES

JOHN HICK



# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Thus, to be a “Christian” is not to be someone who is saved by the propitiation performed by the Son of God
  - “Christianity” is therefore a religion which has far too often abandoned the *true* incarnation in its attempts to defend its supernatural, “God-man” incarnation
    - Jesus was a good but flawed man—even “mistaken about the programme which God planned to follow”—which the early church attempted to gloss over by “investing Jesus with superhuman powers which might indeed have satisfied the tired old dreams of paganism but would utterly exclude any true incarnation of God”  
(i.e.; normal, *non*-Divine-people like you, me, and Jesus, sincerely living out the will of God here on Earth)

GOD  
HAS MANY  
NAMES

JOHN HICK





# *The Modern Age*

- The “modern” church began to take shape

1975

Willow Creek Community Church founded

1977

Focus on the Family was founded

*The Myth of God Incarnate* was published

- One of the leading philosophers of religion in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, John Hick was actually a committed Evangelical as a young man, but drifted toward what he argued was a more “inclusive” understanding of religion as he aged
- In Hick’s line of thinking, Jesus was a good man who was extremely open to being used by God, and that amazing holiness led people to *poetically* think of Him as the Son of God—which, over time, was transposed by “religion” from a *metaphorical* to a *metaphysical* perception of Jesus
- Hick chose his title well for this book, trying to stir up popular interest in theology again
  - In the first six months of its publication, the book sold 30,000 copies, and Hick became the “poster boy” for religious pluralism

The Myth  
of God  
Incarnate

Edited by  
JOHN HICK

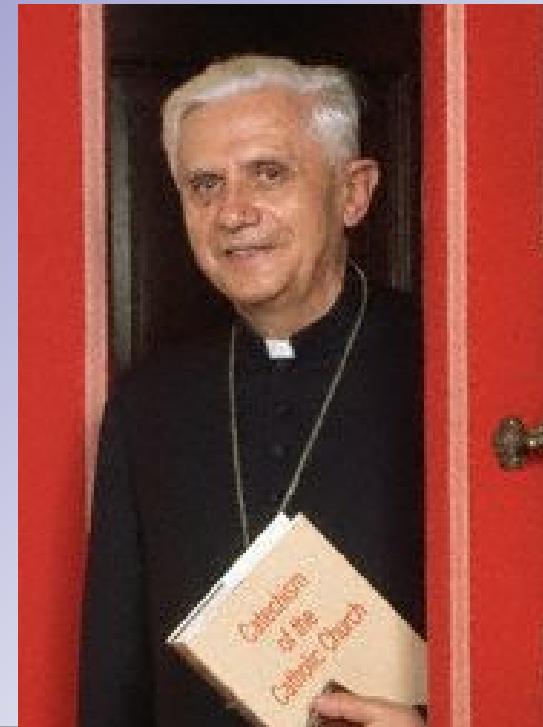


# ***The Modern Age***

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Actually, that placed him squarely in the crosshairs of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, head of The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (i.e.; the “Holy Office”—founded in 1542 to defend the Catholic Church from heresy)

## **The Myth of God Incarnate**

**Edited by  
JOHN HICK**

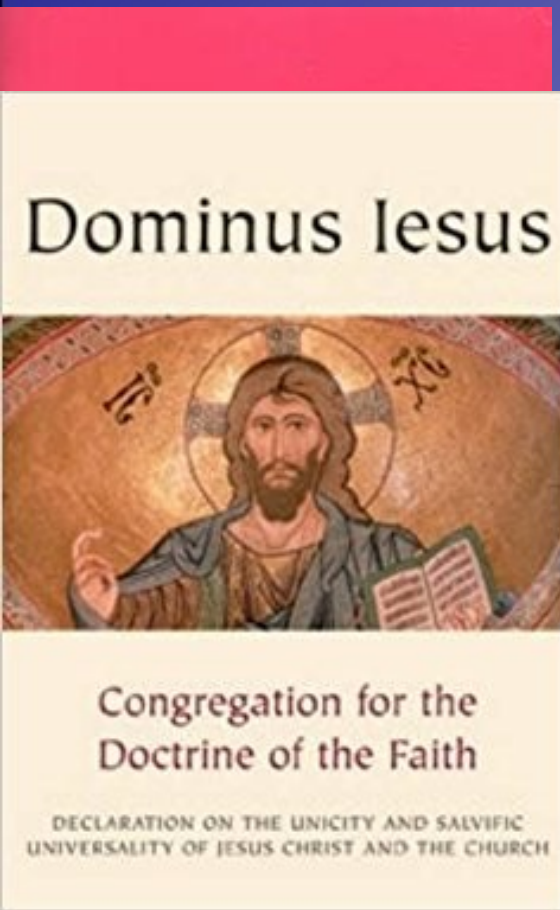


# The Modern Age

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Actually, that placed him squarely in the crosshairs of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, head of The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
  - In 2000, the Holy Office published “*Dominus Iesus*”—an official declaration appreciating the various good works performed in the name of other religions in the world, but reminding Catholics that salvation can *only* be found through the saving grace of Jesus Christ

(NOTE: This document and its argument structure have been viewed by most scholars as consciously attempting to respond to Hick’s philosophical arguments for religious pluralism)

(NOTE<sup>2</sup>: Four months later, Pope John Paul II clarified that “This confession does not deny salvation to non-Christians, but points to its ultimate source in Christ, in whom man and God are united” and added that, “those who live in accordance with the Beatitudes—the poor in spirit, the pure of heart, those who bear lovingly the sufferings of life—will enter God’s kingdom... including those who do not know Christ and his Church...” —which isn’t *that* far removed from what *Hick* had argued)





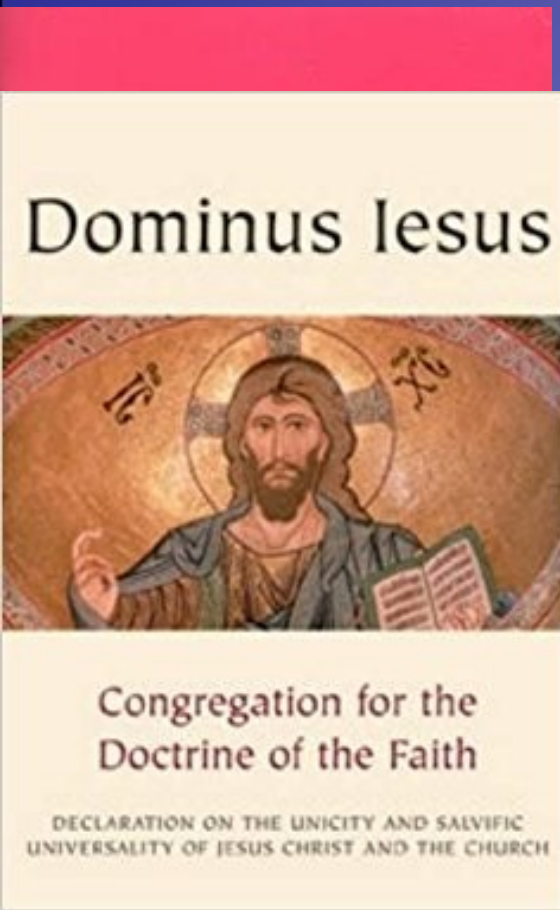
# The Modern Age

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - Actually, that placed him squarely in the crosshairs of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, head of The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
  - In 2000, the Holy Office published “*Dominus Iesus*”—an official declaration appreciating the various good works performed in the name of other religions in the world, but reminding Catholics that salvation can *only* be found through the saving grace of Jesus Christ

(NOTE: This document and its argument structure have been viewed by most scholars as consciously attempting to respond to Hick’s philosophical arguments for religious pluralism)

(NOTE<sup>2</sup>: Four months later, Pope John Paul II clarified that “This confession does not deny salvation to non-Christians, but points to its ultimate source in Christ, in whom man and God are united”)

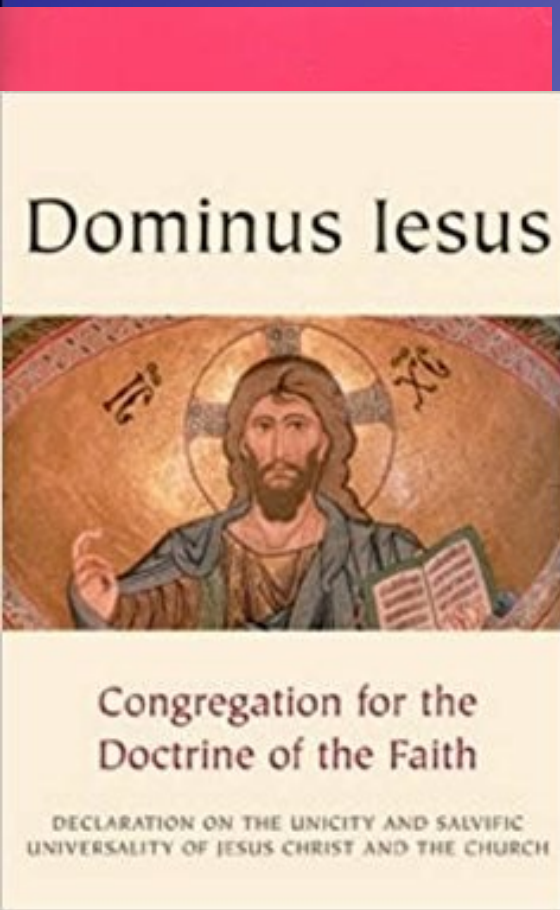
(NOTE<sup>3</sup>: “*Dominus Iesus*” created controversy by affirming Eastern Orthodox churches, and saying that even though Protestant churches aren’t “true churches,” nonetheless, “those who are baptized in these communities are, by Baptism, incorporated in Christ and thus are in a certain communion, albeit imperfect, with the Church”)



# ***The Modern Age***

- **Funky little teaching moment—**
  - Actually, that placed him squarely in the crosshairs of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, head of The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
  - **After John Paul II died in 2005, Ratzinger was elevated to the Papacy, taking the name Benedict XVI**
    - All of this should put into context Benedict's early Papal comments, such as

“Today, a particularly insidious obstacle to the task of education is the massive presence in our society and culture of that relativism which, recognising nothing as definitive, leaves as the ultimate criterion only the self with its desires. And under the semblance of 'freedom' it becomes a prison for each one, for it separates people from one another, locking each person into his or her own ego...”





# The Modern Age

- The “modern” church began to take shape
  - 1975 Willow Creek Community Church founded
  - 1977 Focus on the Family was founded
  - The Myth of God Incarnate* was published
  - Paul and Palestinian Judaism* was published
- Texas-born E.P. Sanders attended New York's liberal Union Theological Seminary, then later taught in Canada
  - Identifying himself as a “liberal, modern, secularized Protestant,” Sanders' work has predominantly focused on understanding Jesus and Paul within their original historical contexts—which is why they *weren't* what you *think* they were, since truths are culturally dependent and thus culturally constructed...
    - For instance, the very Jewish Jesus never did or said anything in the Gospels which the Pharisees would've had any problems with—and thus, the Gospels' descriptions of their antipathy toward Him were either
      - A) overblown by the Gospel writers
      - B) probably more political, due to His actions like when He dumped the tables over in the Temple

PAUL

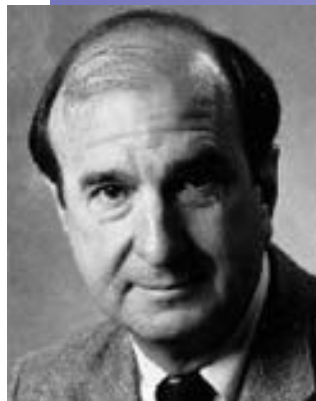
AND

PALESTINIAN

JUDAISM



E.P. SANDERS





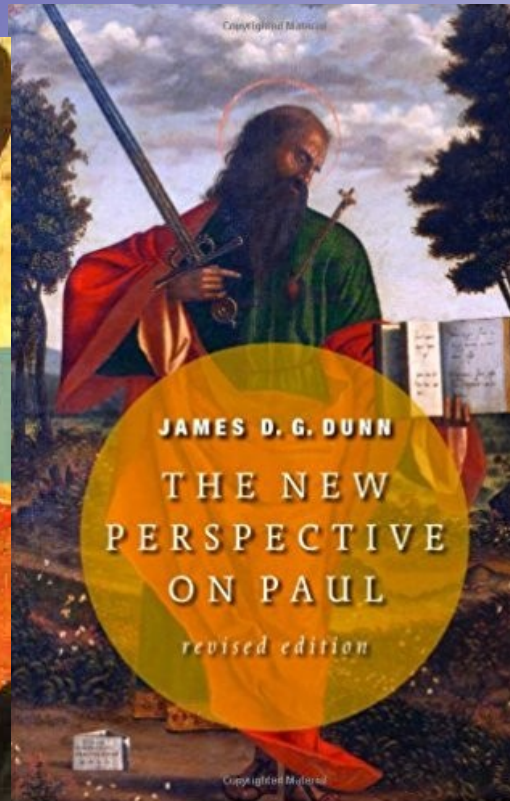
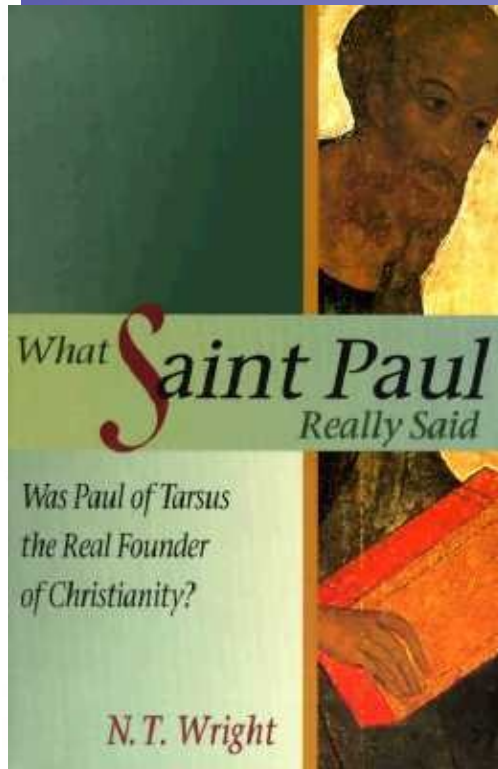
# *The Modern Age*

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - The publication of Sanders' *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* began what Anglican theologian N.T. Wright (and later, scholar James D.G. Dunn) termed the “new perspective on Paul”  
(a movement in which Wendy's uncle, Mark Nanos, is also a relatively new scholar)

## PAUL AND PALESTINIAN JUDAISM



E. P. SANDERS



# The Modern Age

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - The publication of Sanders' Paul and Palestinian Judaism began what Anglican theologian N.T. Wright (and later, scholar James D.G. Dunn) termed the “new perspective on Paul”
  - The basic argument is that most post-Reformation scholars have seen Paul as speaking against a Judaic legalism, in favor of salvation *sola fide*, but what Paul was *actually* arguing for was that Jews *should* follow the Law—but that *Gentiles* shouldn't
  - If we Gentiles see the commands of the Law as magical, Jewish works that turn us into covenant people of God, then we're being *works-oriented* instead of being *God-oriented*
  - Ironically, argue the “new perspective” scholars, that means that we should probably *reverse* our understanding of who constitutes the “weak” and the “strong” brethren in texts like Romans 14, where Paul says, “Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters”—it's the *non-Jew* who is weak, not the legalist just trying to be a *good Jew*

PAUL

AND

PALESTINIAN  
JUDAISM



E. P. SANDERS





# The Modern Age

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - The publication of Sanders' Paul and Palestinian Judaism began what Anglican theologian N.T. Wright (and later, scholar James D.G. Dunn) termed the “new perspective on Paul”
  - The basic argument is that most post-Reformation scholars have seen Paul as speaking against a Judaic legalism, in favor of salvation *sola fide*, but what Paul was *actually* arguing for was that Jews *should* follow the Law—but that *Gentiles* shouldn't
  - If we Gentiles see the commands of the Law as magical, Jewish works that turn us into covenant people of God, then we're being *works-oriented* instead of being *God-oriented*
  - So when *Jews* follow the Law as a matter of cultural identity, then that's how they *continue* being *God-oriented*
  - Ironically, argue the “new perspective” scholars, that means that the problem of the “Judaizers” of Acts 15 *wasn't* that they were calling new Christians to follow Jewish *rules* in order to be saved, but that they were calling new Gentile Christians to follow *Jewish* rules in order to be saved—'cuz that's for *Jews*

PAUL

AND

PALESTINIAN  
JUDAISM



E. P. SANDERS





# The Modern Age

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - The publication of Sanders' Paul and Palestinian Judaism began what Anglican theologian N.T. Wright (and later, scholar James D.G. Dunn) termed the “new perspective on Paul”
  - The basic argument is that most post-Reformation scholars have seen Paul as speaking against a Judaic legalism, in favor of salvation *sola fide*, but what Paul was *actually* arguing for was that Jews *should* follow the Law—but that *Gentiles* shouldn't
    - If we Gentiles see the commands of the Law as magical, Jewish works that turn us into covenant people of God, then we're being *works-oriented* instead of being *God-oriented*
    - So when *Jews* follow the Law as a matter of cultural identity, then that's how they *continue* being *God-oriented*
    - Thus, though for centuries, people have seen Paul as saying that we shouldn't continue following the Law, he was only saying that for *Gentiles*—he was saying the exact *opposite* for *Jews*
      - Ironically, argue most “new perspective” scholars, God judges us *primarily* on our works—on how we actively *do* or do *not* live out our faith within our community

PAUL

AND

PALESTINIAN  
JUDAISM

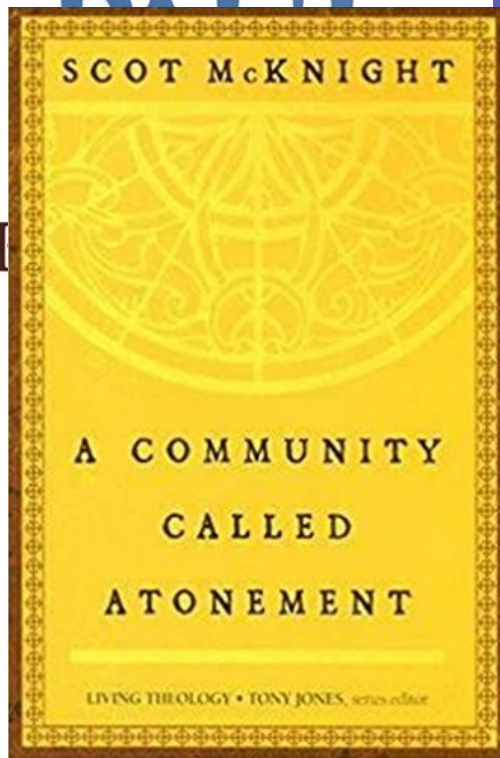


E. P. SANDERS



# The Modern Age

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - The publication of Sanders' Paul and Palestinian Judaism began what Anglican theologian N.T. Wright (and later, scholar James D.G. Dunn) termed the “new perspective on Paul”
  - The basic argument is that most post-Reformation scholars have seen Paul as speaking against a Judaic legalism, in favor of salvation *sola fide*, but what Paul was *actually* arguing for was that Jews *should* follow the Law—but that *Gentiles* shouldn't
  - If we Gentiles see the commands of the Law as magical, Jewish works that turn us into covenant people of God, then we're being *works-oriented* instead of being *God-oriented*
  - So when *Jews* follow the Law as a matter of cultural identity, then that's how they *continue* being *God-oriented*
  - Thus, though for centuries, people have seen Paul as saying that we shouldn't continue following the Law, he was only saying that for *Gentiles*—he was saying the exact *opposite* for *Jews*
  - As scholar Scot McKnight puts it, “God's idea of redemption is *community-shaped*...”

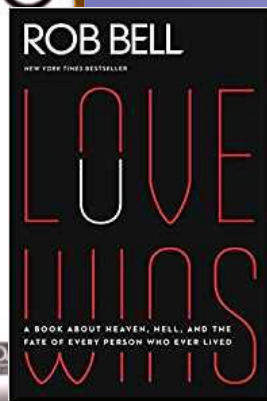
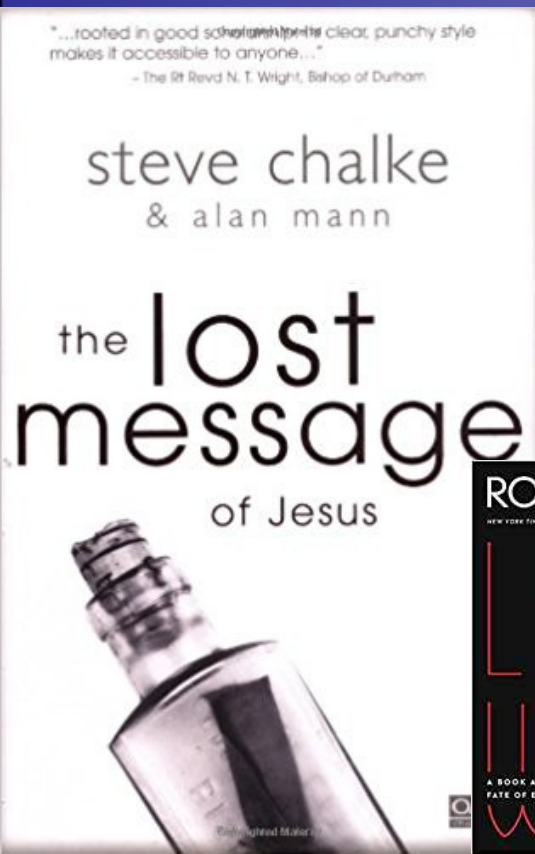




# The Modern Age

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - The publication of Sanders' Paul and Palestinian Judaism began what Anglican theologian N.T. Wright (and later, scholar James D.G. Dunn) termed the “new perspective on Paul”
  - Of course, that leads to some interesting ripple effects
    - For instance, Evangelical scholar Steve Chalke came under fire in 2004 for his renunciation of the classic “penal atonement” doctrine, arguing that it constitutes a “cosmic child abuse” on the part of God
    - If we're truly saved by how we live out our faith within our distinct communities, then how can we say that we're saved because God abused Jesus?
    - Instead, we should consider ourselves saved because of the infusion of righteousness into our lives by the righteousness of Jesus, accessed by our own living out of His righteousness

(NOTE: Much like Rob Bell's motivation for writing his 2012 book, *Love Wins*, Chalke admits that his Evangelical theology takes a back seat to his heart for social justice—seeing so many people in the world being hurt so often, he simply could not believe that a loving God would similarly hurt his own Son)



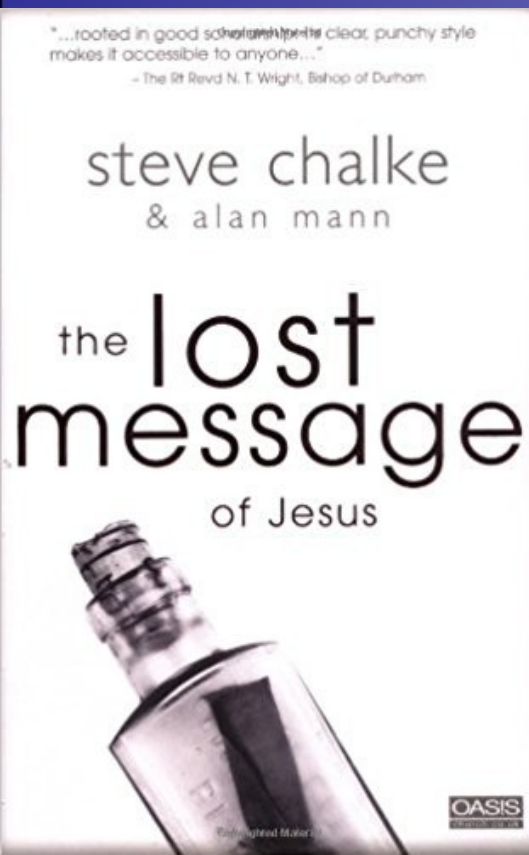


# The Modern Age

- Funky little teaching moment—
  - The publication of Sanders' Paul and Palestinian Judaism began what Anglican theologian N.T. Wright (and later, scholar James D.G. Dunn) termed the “new perspective on Paul”
  - Of course, that leads to some interesting ripple effects
    - For instance, Evangelical scholar Steve Chalke came under fire in 2004 for his renunciation of the classic “penal atonement” doctrine, arguing that it constitutes a “cosmic child abuse” on the part of God
    - If we're truly saved by how we live out our faith within our distinct communities, then how can we say that we're saved because God abused Jesus?
    - Instead, we should consider ourselves saved because of the infusion of righteousness into our lives by the righteousness of Jesus, accessed by our own living out of His righteousness

(NOTE: Much like Rob Bell's motivation for writing his 2012 book, *Love Wins*, Chalke admits that his Evangelical theology takes a back seat to his heart for social justice)

(NOTE<sup>2</sup>: That's also what drives his support for gay marriage—that we can't keep calling it a sin when doing so hurts so many good people, no matter what “doctrine” says)



# *The Modern Age*

- **Funky little teaching moment—**
  - The publication of Sanders' Paul and Palestinian Judaism began what Anglican theologian N.T. Wright (and later, scholar James D.G. Dunn) termed the “new perspective on Paul”
  - **Of course, that leads to some interesting ripple effects**
    - **For instance, Evangelical scholar Steve Chalke came under fire in 2004 for his renunciation of the classic “penal atonement” doctrine, arguing that it constitutes a “cosmic child abuse” on the part of God**
    - If we're truly saved by how we live out our faith within our distinct communities, then how can we say that we're saved because God abused Jesus?
    - Instead, we should consider ourselves saved because of the infusion of righteousness into our lives by the righteousness of Jesus, accessed by our own living out of His righteousness
    - **All of that suggests that Pope Benedict XVI was basically right in recognizing that “massive presence in our society and culture of that relativism which, recognising nothing as definitive, leaves as the ultimate criterion only the self with its desires”**





# ***The Modern Age***

- The “modern” church began to take shape
  - 1975 Willow Creek Community Church founded
  - 1977 Focus on the Family was founded  
*The Myth of God Incarnate* was published  
*Paul and Palestinian Judaism* was published
  - 1978 *The Ryrie Study Bible* was published

